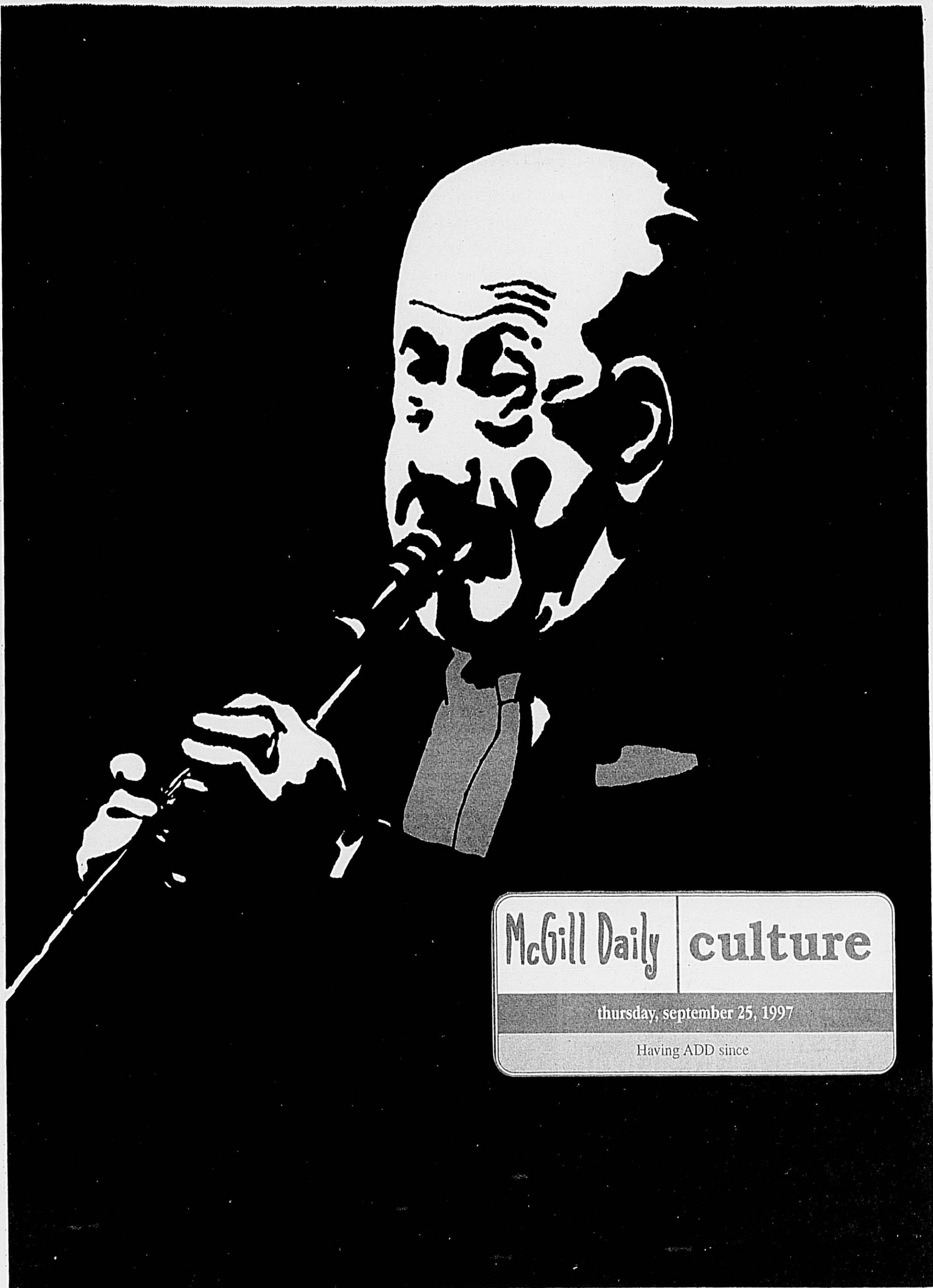




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Cycles of Life

Montage: collaborative forces of student artists

by Sean McIntyre

A literary publication currently available to the Montréal public, *Montage* is, in the words of associate editor Kate Gibson, "an annual journal dedicated to publishing the poetry, short fiction, drawings, and photographs of McGill students." This year's edition revolves around one particular theme: the transitions between the positive and negative social energies that characterize life on this planet. In a broad sense, it is these energies that provide the foundation for periods of stagnation and periods of prosperity (be they economic, political, or intellectual). According to the editors of *Montage*, it is easier to notice these transitions if they are looked at on a cyclical level. Thus this year's edition was designed to represent one full rotation of this Turn.

Amidst the introductory remarks of the journal, it is made quite clear that life consists of an endless number of cyclical events. Everything from the tides and the seasons to personal moods and relationships fall within some sort of cyclical pattern. Historical references to concepts such as Hindu Cosmology and the Mayan calendar are also used to reinforce the point that these forces have been recognized as a constant presence over time.

On the surface, one cannot help but notice the manner in which the volume is presented. The beautifully assembled work contains within it over 80 pages of nicely laid out text and photographs. The black-and-white photographs and illustrations are interspersed throughout the book, conveying the central theme as expressively as the texts do. The result is a publication of incredible unity, due to the collaborative dynamic of its workers, where each piece plays an integral role in the overall meaning of the work.

With regard to the photographs, two relevant characteristics should be noted. Firstly, one might easily observe the manner in which the

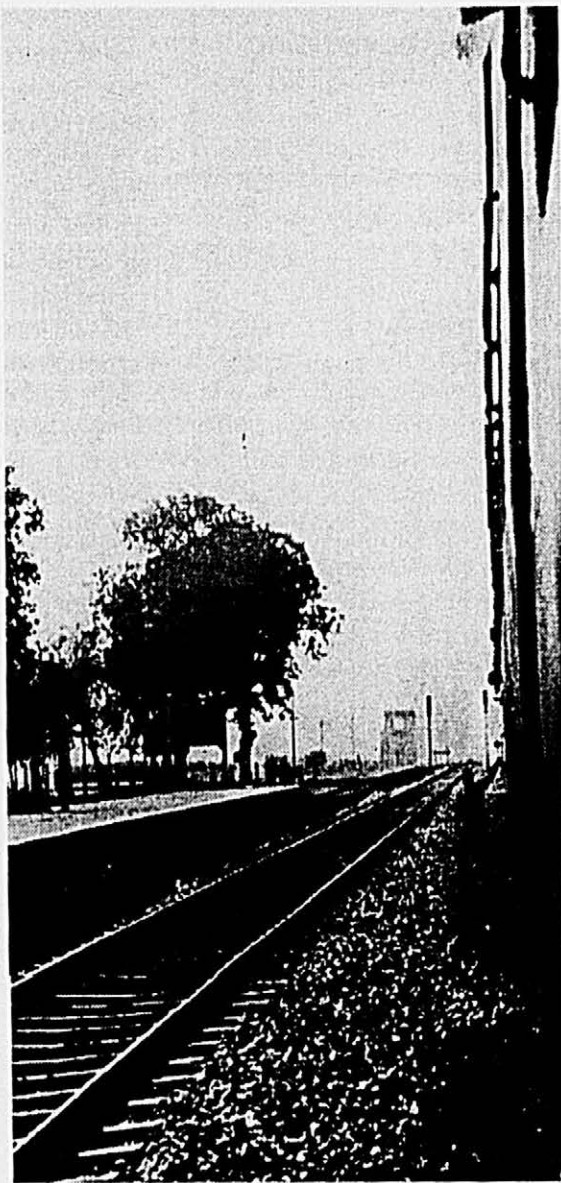
story are happy with their lives and, as a result, each moment is conveyed in a tone of bliss. This feeling, evoked through the delicate

mixing of vivid and somewhat vulgar concepts of pop-cultural clichés. In the poem, the reader is provided with an image of a lone individual confronting the eternal system of change. Van Loon raises the often forgotten issue that people are still able to resist the temptation of change. In raising her own feelings on the subject, she is demonstrating the potential that is held within an individual's will. It is this potential that erupts by way of the sheer emotional force of the author's personal voice.

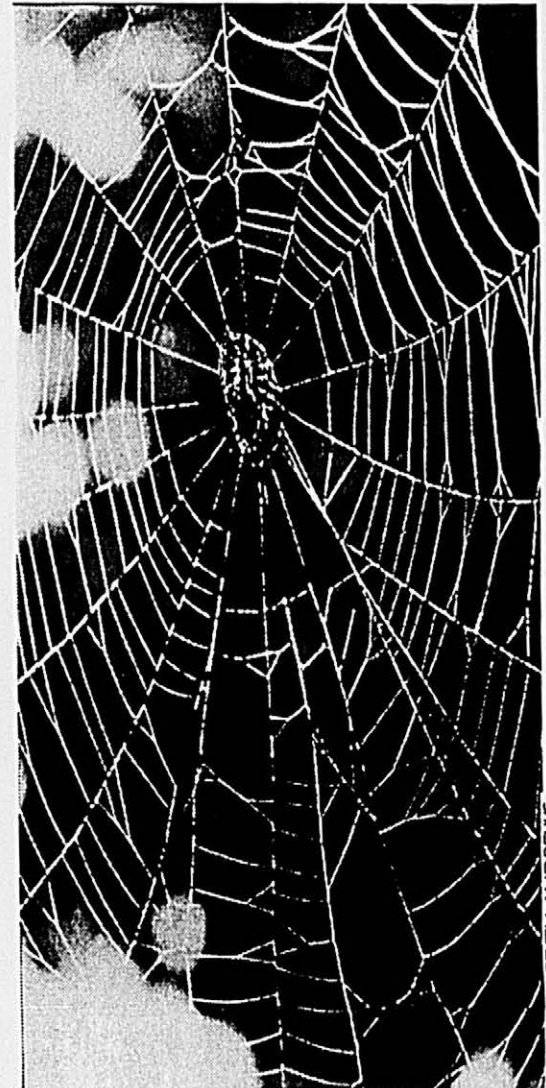
When assembled, the works' themes of freedom, enlightenment, and individuality are shown to be sharply contrasted with those of isolation, despair, and loneliness. Through these topics, one is able to gain an interesting perspective on the "great cycle". The works throughout *Montage* in turn demonstrate how the cycle can be related to such concepts as the universe, society, and the individual.

However, in order to truly enjoy this year's edition of *Montage*, one must be able to look at the collection in its entirety. When looked at individually, one is left with a particular emotion but lacks the necessary context in which to place it. In doing so, one is ignoring the fact

that each piece has its specific place in the greater scheme of things. Each work is indeed a step in the



SELECTION FROM MONTAGE



SELECTION FROM MONTAGE

PHOTO BY MEREDITH ANDREWS

depth of field creates either a feeling of isolation or of participation. By observing a picture with significant depth, one is given the impression similar to that of an outsider looking at something forbidden or untouchable.

A second notion that might be noted about certain photographs is the fundamental simplicity of their subjects. Pictures such as those of a spider-web, a tree, or a window sill are so elementary that they, within the larger scope of the book, expose the reader to a multiplicity of possible interpretations.

One of the fascinating aspects of *Montage* is the sheer variety of works that are found within it. In a short story entitled "La Chaise Dieu", by Kate Gibson, the reader is invited to follow along on a day trip through the country side of central France. Upon reading the piece, one is made aware of an incredible feeling of relaxed enjoyment. It is shown that the characters in the

flow of the sentences, is inscribed within the larger frame of the book. The story illustrates the "positive energies" which are part of the general theme, described here along the intimate lines of an individual's personal experiences.

In a poem with a somewhat different flair, Heide Van Loon manages to bring up the issue of change and transformation. In "Millennium", images of identity and conformity are contrasted through a

universal cycle and if one only reads a few pieces the efforts of those working at *Montage* will have been lost.

Writers, photographers, production assistants, and anyone else interested in contributing to the 1998 edition of *Montage* can get involved by attending their bimonthly meetings. Further information can be obtained from the Department of English Students' Association. This year's edition will be available throughout the Arts building.

The McGill Daily Culture

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number 8

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Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor,

I was misquoted in the article entitled "Would you like coffee with that textbook" written by Maggie Gilmour (The McGill Daily, Volume 87, Issue 7, Monday, September 22nd, 1997). I would like to take this opportunity to correct the quote. On p.8, Ms. Gilmour wrote: "Not everyone is thrilled with Chapters' potential involvement with the McGill bookstore. When asked if the takeover was a good idea, Anna Kruzynski, member of the McGill Senate and Vice-President of the Post-Graduate Students' Society, says 'no way'". The "no way" was taken out of context. Ms. Gilmour asked me what I thought of the takeover, and I answered that I was not prepared to make a statement regarding the payoffs or perils of outsourcing the management, because I did not have all the relevant information. However, I did say that - had Chapters actually purchased the bookstore - not simply been hired to manage the store - thereby taking away potential revenue from the Students' Society and beginning a trend towards corporate profits on the backs of students - I would have answered "no way".

Anna Kruzynski
University and Academic Affairs Co-ordinator
Post-Graduate Students' Society

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WHIM

WONDERS

by Sarah Brodie and Noémi Tousignant

The Miami, Friday
night, 1:17 am

Sarah: This came out of Wenders' desire to make a film about violence without there being any violence in it. Wim Wenders is making that sketchy trip into Hollywood Land, and then he pretty much got his pick of the crop, and he chose Bill Pullman and...

N: Andie MacDowell...why? Why Andie MacDowell?

S: Maybe she's always gotten drastically miscast...

N: My roommate calls her a post, as in, she acts about as well as a fence-post. But, how do you prepare yourself to watch a film like this? What expectations can you allow yourself to carry into the film—I mean, with *Paris Texas*, *Wings of Desire*, *Faraway So Close*, this whole filmography of repertory staples, and then this... [pointing to the glossy, glitzy presskit thing]. It was my teenage fantasy to be in a Wim Wenders film...

S: I've heard that they're re-making *Until the End of the World* in Hollywoodian [sans subtitles] as we speak...

N: This is a tragedy in my life...

S: I heard they were shooting scenes hot off the press for *The End of Violence*, as soon as they had been written, page by page.

N: Perhaps our article should be written in the same spirit...

Daily Office, 10:30 pm

N: There was so much potential...in many different ways, but especially in the possibility of having a dialogue between the language of the mainstream, Hollywood style, and the "artfilm genre"...of course, there's always a danger that the resulting "hybrid genre" will experience the same constriction from the set of rules that comes with having a "genre"...but at least it would have made it interesting.

Aaron: The whole film was just a bunch of clichés...I mean, you know that line that went something like 'sometimes your friends are your enemies, sometimes your enemies are your friends, sometimes you just don't know' The first sentence says something, the second sentence cancels the first one, the third one cancels out the whole movie!

Sarah: Wim Wenders has gathered enough clout so that the mere announcement that he has been pondering "violence" gets him all sorts of attention [Cannes billed the

film before it was cast]. He gets even more attention by turning the camera around on itself, setting *The End of Violence* in movieland, opening with an explosive stunt scene from an action flick.

Noémi: "A film about violence that doesn't have any violence in it", it's a dodgy premise that gets lost in a silly plot of romances and kidnapping. But Wenders is smarter than all that, and attempts to confound the issue—throwing critics off the scent of a stinky script. That is, the film is full of complex references to technology, video surveillance, voyeurs, (and, strangely, poetry readings). None of these ideas are fleshed-out, however, so they relegated to being props. The ten million video monitors in every shot only serve to remind us that there are just as many loose ends in the plot.

Sarah: I won't get into MacDowell and Pullman's tepid performances, as I think the problems here were even deeper than the half-baked character developments. It is too bad, because interesting ideas were invested in the film, that eventually falls back on tiresome clichés, making for ridiculous female characters, unintriguing relationships, and an unresolved ending.

Noémi: Maybe as an artist's apology, Wenders cast Udo Kier as his alter-ego in the film—an imported German director, "Zoltan". In one scene, Zoltan throws up his hands in exasperation with Hollywood, and mutters something about going back to where he came from. I am tempted to give Wenders a bit of credit and pretend that, like Zoltan, he got lost in the Los Angeles shuffle. But this man has made enough solid films that he should own up to what came off as a silly doodle on a good portfolio.

[Suddenly, a hysterical, middle-aged, handsome man bursts in the room....]

Whimsically Whining Wonderful Wenders: You degenerate little MTV-brainwashed, post-modern adolescent ignoramii. You know nothing of my art! Who are you to question me, Whimsy Wonders (Wender)!, the greatest of all living filmmakers, so great in fact that I can slum in Hollywood and it won't change a thing about my kick ass career anyway. (Anyways, no one reads this paper anyways...I guess I'll have to take my case to the Tribune...)

The Art of Dining: A Comic Feast

New McGill play mocks dinner, bourgeoisie,
and the rest of the trash

by Jonathan Lobel

The Art of Dining is this year's first production of the Player's theatre of McGill. Brought to stage by the young and talented Kevin Clement, this light comedy takes place in The Golden Carousel, a posh restaurant just outside of New York.

The set is very cosy: a dining room suffused in soft light and bathed in gentle baroque music. In the back is the kitchen, where Ellen cooks with Cal, her husband, who doubles as the waiter. They have just recently turned their house into a restaurant and business is thriving. Word is spreading that Ellen is a master cook and the restaurant is booked months in advance. The guests arrive for a pleasant evening out and to provide us with the voyeurish pleasure of observing high class society trying to keep up appearances.

First arrive Hannah and Paul Gault (played by Lucinda Davis and Alex Simon), a married couple. Eating is their only common interest and has become a very sexual experience for them. Choosing from their menu, they behave as if they're making love: their breathing is heavy, accom-

panied by allusive bodily gestures, as they climax with the ecstatic ordering of the meal. Sadly, when not eating or talking about food, Hannah and Paul do not care much for one another. When Hannah tells Paul of her day he simply does not listen, responding instead with an account of his day. The two parallel monologues only converge when they talk about what they had for lunch.

The tone of the comedy is light. Sometimes subtle, sometimes less, the comic effects are always efficient. The author, Tina Howe, cites the Marx Brothers as having had an important influence on her work. Served by a truly excellent cast of young ac-

tors, she succeeds in having "her audience fall off their chairs and rolling in the aisles with laughter."

However, comedy here is used as a critique of social values and human behaviour. Howe uses

birthday. So they hold back and try to be friendly. But when Tony refuses to finish her striped Bass with shrimp mousse, Nessa bursts out into a flood of insults.

As the play draws to the end, the situation gets dramatic. Cal,



PHOTO BY RACHEL ONG

SCENE FROM THE PLAY THE ART OF DINING

"the art of dining" as means of exploring her characters. In the play, it reveals the anguished individual behind the social identity. In the words of Tina Howe herself, her writing aims "to present a lovely exterior, then seduce the audience into the dark and mysterious places inside."

The characters' behaviour on their night out lets you imagine how unhappy they are in private. For instance, when Hannah and Paul

The characters' behaviour on their night out lets you imagine how unhappy they are in private.

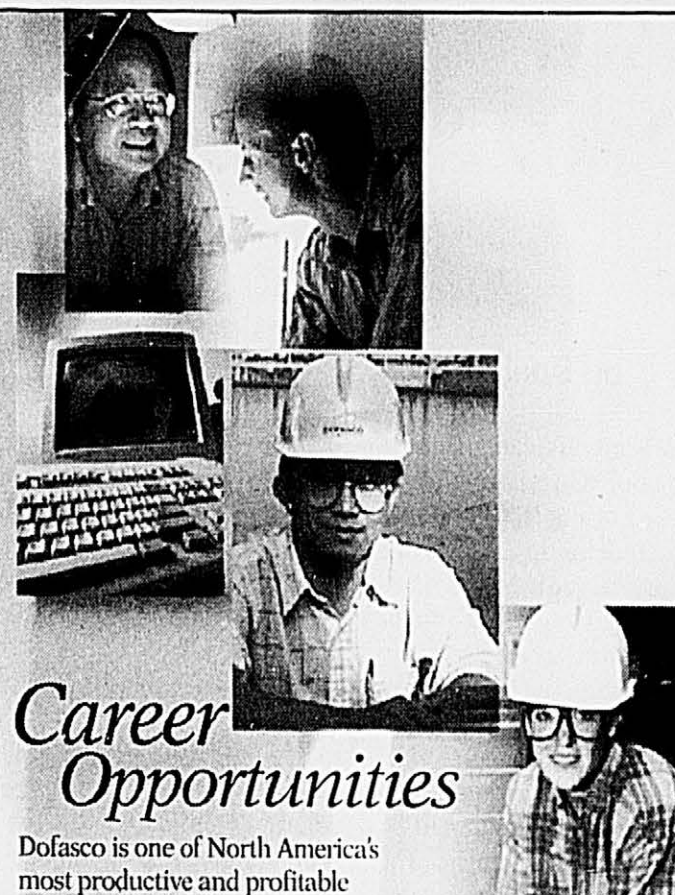
get carried away into a ridiculous series of toasts you get a glimpse of their empty modern suburban lives: "To our children!" cheers Hannah and Paul replies rather unconvincingly, "Oh yeah, Brian and Michael; super kids!". It seems rather that they care only for the ritual of dining: when Paul toasts to their next meal, Hannah does not conceal her excitement: "Oooh I like that..."

Unaware of their feelings and unable to communicate, they use food as a medium to express themselves. Tony, Nessa and Herrick are best of friends and they will never admit that there is tension between the three of them, especially not on Tony's

the waiter, who is too anxious for the restaurant to succeed, has been compulsively eating all the ingredients before Ellen even has a chance to cook them. His neurotic attitude towards food is threatening the restaurant's reputation. Meanwhile, the three girlfriends refuse to talk to each other and Elizabeth, a young writer who is meeting her future editor, breaks down when reminiscing about her crazy family.

The ending is slightly unexpected but definitely in keeping with the logic of the play. Instead of escalating the tensions towards a catastrophic finale, the author opts for a deceptively courteous reconciliation: clients and staff all sit down for dessert, though having no conversation to share. Rather than developing a didactic analysis of modern times, the author decides to stay on a human level. The comedic tone stays light and is thoroughly engaging. The young actors' talents are served by witty dialogue and clever stage directing, and their enthusiasm is contagious.

The Art of Dining is playing at the Player's Theatre (398-6813) every night until Saturday at 8pm. There is an additional matinee Saturday at 2pm. Tickets are 6\$ (for students).



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Troubles Plague Planning

Reluctance and budget cuts p

by Sonia Verma

Québec's Assistant Deputy Minister of Education is today scheduled to visit McGill's House for First Peoples', to acknowledge the Province's role in kick-starting the facility with a much-needed grant awarded to the House last year. But for some Native students, there is little cause for celebration. The handful of McGill students and administrators expected to attend will be sitting on borrowed chairs. The front door of the House remains locked, the coordinator resigned over the summer, and until August a fraternity occupied the building's upper floor. With the provincial grant only half of the amount requested, Native students fear that the anticipated budgetary shortfall will leave the House on shaky fiscal ground. With no financial support from the university, a small group of students is scrambling to find alternate sources of funding. But when the cash runs out, will Na-

over the years according to a report submitted by the university to the Ministère de l'Éducation. This stands in sharp contrast to a national pattern of increased numbers of Native students in other post-secondary institutions.

There were only 68 Native students in 1993, placing it fourth among other Quebec universities. The First Peoples' House was supposed to help reverse that trend, providing the necessary support to boost the overall number of Native students at McGill.

"Given McGill's reputation, it's strange that their services for Native students should be so far behind" Wassaykeesic continued. "This campus isn't a very warm place for Native students. There is a definite need to sensitise McGill to what it means to be Aboriginal while affirming our own identity in this environment."

Jeannette LaMontagne, speaking from McGill's government relations

office, worked on the proposal which eventually made it to the offices of the Ministère de l'Éducation in December 1995. "We wanted to make sure Native students who came to McGill had a place to organize," she explained.

In March 1996, the Ministère de l'Éducation announced that it would award McGill \$200,000 to get the project off the ground, although the university originally requested double that amount. Spread over four years, \$200,000 doesn't go far. The salary of a coordinator alone - the only paid staff position for the House - is \$30 000 per year. Additionally, McGill invoices the House \$11 000 annually to cover the maintenance cost of the property, which was bought by McGill last September under the tacit understanding that part of the grant would be used to offset the mortgage. Rodney Bobbiwash, Director of the University of Toronto's Native Students' Centre is sharply critical of the

\$11,000 being paid to McGill for property maintenance, describing it as giving with one hand while taking with the other. Such sleight-of-hand places the House in precarious financial straits with a shoe-string budget of only \$9 000 a year.

"It's a fraction of our budget," comments Bobbiwash. "What needs to be done with a Centre is a whole process of community building, and I don't see how this can be done with that amount of money." Measured against the wealth of services offered by U of T, McGill fares dismally in comparison. A paid staff of counselors, tutors, elders, outreach workers and resource people service the active community of 500 U of T students who frequent the centre.

Bobbiwash argues for the instrumentality of such a multi-faceted approach. "If you don't have the services, it doesn't work - students don't graduate and can't access the services they need. They're unable

to transform the institutions which they're in and it's precisely that work which needs to be done so urgently."

Bobbiwash is likewise wary of the parameters the grant will impose on the operations of the centre, which will effectively deny Native students full autonomy in determining financial priorities. "You are constantly having to justify your existence under a grant that takes away your freedom to decide where you want to spend your money," he points out. In contrast, The U of T Centre is supported through a diverse combination of students, foundations and fundraising. Bobbiwash

Dean of Students Rosalie Jukier, acknowledges that the grant falls short of McGill's original request, but insists that "it's the way that we use the money that matters." McGill administrators, however, are particularly reluctant to specify where that money will come from once the

made at McGill? Spearheaded by a small group of McGill students and administrators, who identified a glaring lack of centralised programmes and services for Native students at the university, the creation of the First Peoples' House is the culmination of a lengthy process which began nearly four years ago.

In 1993, Marian Stenbeck, head of McGill's Centre for Northern Studies, submitted a report to the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP). The report underscored the conspicuous absence of support services for Native Students at McGill. Once the suggestion of a First Peoples' House was on the table, support coalesced around the project and a two year consultation process with Aboriginal and Inuit communities ensued.

The working group identified such a facility as essential, particularly given the lack of services for Native students resulting from drying-up federal support. A report published in 1995 by the Canadian Federation of Students cited cut-backs to federal aboriginal support programmes as one of the primary causes for undermining access to universities for Native students. The House was intended to create a better environment for those Native students who did manage to enroll.

"I was tempted to leave McGill," commented April Wassaykeesic, a third year history student. In fact, the number of Native students at McGill has decreased alarmingly

The last time I went to the night club Angel's, my 20 year old black male friend was carded after we had just watched at least 15 white clubgoers go in without being asked for any ID. He did not have any ID on him and was therefore refused. We protested and mentioned what we felt was unfair prejudism, but were treated hostilely and finally ignored. We felt angry and frustrated but had no legitimate reason to believe the incident was racially motivated until exactly one week later when another black male friend of mine, Lekan Timidire, was refused at Angel's.

"I went with 6 Caucasian friends who I was older than and showed ID but he didn't let me in," says Timidire.

When he asked why security refused him, he was given no explanation. After his friends got in without showing ID the bouncer told him, "I can't let you in... get out of here."

The Target Clientele

Owners make money by creating an environment in which their clients enjoy themselves and buy drinks. Their success rests on the club acquiring a reputation. But, in

our highly segmented society, what attracts one group does not neces-

White trendy youth form a very ideal target group because they are

club he or she usually envisions an ideal crowd," explains black promoter and bouncer Ali. "I'm not sure if black people are part of that ideal crowd."

After talking to other black friends, it became apparent that many of them have also been refused and insulted at Angel's and other mainstream establishments. Of course club owners and bouncers will often couch their racially prejudiced policies in a list of common excuses: "it's VIP night", "it's regulars' night", "it's a private party" or "it's over 21 night" amongst others.

As Ali explains clubs are "known to employ black people to keep blacks out, so it doesn't look bad."

Keeping to the quota

If a club lets in too many people who do not fit the image, then the club loses its reputation and favour in the target group's eyes.

Like one bouncer, Ron, put it, "Peel Club will let in anyone from a 60 year old man to a 15 year old girl (if she can show ID). You can't let people from Peel Club into DiSalvio's. It blemishes the reputation."

In effect, the owner sets the ideal, and the bouncer is responsible for its

"Can I see some ID, please?"

by Verda Cook

our highly segmented society, what attracts one group does not neces-

White trendy youth form a very ideal target group because they are

club he or she usually envisions an ideal crowd," explains black promoter and bouncer Ali. "I'm not sure if black people are part of that ideal crowd."

After talking to other black friends, it became apparent that many of them have also been refused and insulted at Angel's and other mainstream establishments. Of course club owners and bouncers will often couch their racially prejudiced policies in a list of common excuses: "it's VIP night", "it's regulars' night", "it's a private party" or "it's over 21 night" amongst others.

As Ali explains clubs are "known to employ black people to keep blacks out, so it doesn't look bad."

Keeping to the quota

If a club lets in too many people who do not fit the image, then the club loses its reputation and favour in the target group's eyes.

Like one bouncer, Ron, put it, "Peel Club will let in anyone from a 60 year old man to a 15 year old girl (if she can show ID). You can't let people from Peel Club into DiSalvio's. It blemishes the reputation."

In effect, the owner sets the ideal, and the bouncer is responsible for its



ARE MONTREAL CLUBS EXCLUDING CLIENTS ON THE BASIS OF RACE?

sarily interest another. Therefore, the owner, before opening his/her club, establishes a target clientele.

plentiful, on average have money, and are deemed controllable.

"When a club owner opens a

ed First Peoples' House

place future of House in grave doubt

life span of the grant expires. "Obviously the more money you have, the better, and at some time, the money will run out and we'll have to find alternate ways of funding the House," Jukier admitted. She would not, however, commit to imitating a funding structure involving student fees, which exists at U of T and at Trent.

"The basic plan was to get it off the ground, then all of these options would be out there," explains Martha Crago, Associate Vice Principal of graduate studies, who was involved with the start-up of the House. "McGill had no money and at the time [of the proposal] this was a contentious issue. How would McGill undertake this project? The government money was used to get it situated - now we can start to get things together," she said.

That task fell under the purview of the House's coordinator, whose responsibilities would include the establishment of comprehensive

support services for Native students and intensive fundraising to supplement the facility's budget.

Linda Arkwright was hired as House coordinator last January by a committee which included Jukier and Dale Turner, a Native student currently at Dartmouth University in New Hampshire. Arkwright was able to make considerable headway in establishing liaisons with Aboriginal communities, initiating both a mentor program and a resource centre. Following her unexpected resignation over the summer, however, much of the ground gained during her tenure has been lost.

Turner suggests that she wasn't provided with the necessary support from McGill to fulfill her duties. "Linda was brought in because she was an incredible fundraiser, but you need a support system to do that - she didn't even have an office or a phone. "Rosalie [Jukier] was great during the hiring process, but she seemed to disappear after

the building was purchased," Turner described. "They sat on it for so long that Linda [Arkwright] ended up quitting because they didn't provide the resources for her to do her job."

Arkwright has yet to be replaced, and according to Jukier, the hiring committee has yet to be formed. "The University just washed its hands," notes Turner.

Neither Arkwright nor Jukier were available for comment on this matter at presstime.

Alleged mismanagement and a lack of will on the part of the administration to press forward with the project continue to frustrate a small group of Native students who refer to themselves, only half-jokingly, as 'Nomads at McGill'. Strapped for cash, and organisationally crippled, the students have found themselves in the position of having to demonstrate the viability of the First Peoples' House, without the benefit of a coordinator or even a functional space.

Future funding and cooperation from McGill depends largely upon the ability of the students to rally support for the House. This is reliant upon encouraging enough Native students to use the facility. The number of identified Native students at the University hovers beneath 100 - but that's according to McGill's count. When Concordia opened the doors to its Native Students' Centre, the university identified only 25 students. "That was because there was inadequate means of identification," explains Manon Tremblay, the Centre's director. "Once we had the Centre in good shape, there was a place where they could identify. We now have 300 students, about half of which use the Centre on a regular basis," she continued.

According to Turner, if the House is to succeed it can, by default, only be through the actions of the students themselves. "The initiative should come from the students be-

cause I have absolutely no faith in the administration," he contends.

The small group of Native students united behind the idea of the House discussed the possibility of lobbying McGill to funnel student services fees to offset costs of running the House. This formula has proved the most effective in securing a stable operating budget at Native Student Centres across the country.

Wassaykeesic, however, was not optimistic that the University administration, or students, would support such a move. "There is a perception on campus that Native students ask for too much anyway - it's not a good climate to ask for that," she said. "McGill was broke when they were first approached to start the house, and will probably be broke for a long time. We feel like beggars or paupers asking for these services, so we're reluctant to approach the administration." Wassaykeesic alludes to the irony of the situation, given that awareness campaigns and projects coordinated through the planned House would be targeted towards combating exactly such misconceptions.

The fact that Native students on campus find themselves in the subordinate position of requesting money from McGill angers some observers. Kahn-tineta Horn, a former member of Six Nations Council points out that "The question isn't how much is McGill going to give us. The question should be how much do you owe us."

According to Phil Monture, director of the Six Nations Land Claims Research Office, the Crown's Executive Council loaned McGill University \$40 000 on June 14, 1860. Part of that loan was filtered through Charles Dewy Day who received \$8,000 on behalf of the university on December 20 of that year. The money allegedly came from the Six Nations trust fund. It remains unclear, however, whether the founders of McGill knew where the money originated from.

What is clear, is that none of that money was ever paid back.

Since 1994, Six Nations has been locked in litigation with the Crown, seeking reimbursement of the original amount plus accumulated interest. "They have never paid back the money and probably never will," Horn predicts, "This school was built on native land with native money - since then, they have put nothing but roadblocks in our way."

ase?"

Do Montréal bars exercise racist policies?

enforcement. He is the gatekeeper of the night club's reputation and fabricated atmosphere.

"The boss tells you what he wants," elaborates Ron. "[Depending on the club]: it's no tramps, no ugly girls, no straight guys, etc."

Although a certain number of black people in a mainstream club is deemed 'cool', too many ruins the image. Many people have mentioned that they are more likely to get refused on a Saturday when possibly the 'black quota' has already been filled.

This concept of the 'black quota' brings in the issue of xenophobia. That is, historically, although a few minorities in a social framework have been tolerated, once the number becomes larger the majority reacts. A club is a microcosm of society, and when too many black people or any other minority group enter, many of the mainstreamers become uncomfortable. Power relationships are altered as the minority can assert influence on their surroundings. As a result, a few blacks are often allowed in these clubs but only to the extent that they remain powerless.

The stereotypes

Another factor which leads to discrimination of especially black

males is stereotypes of violence. The stereotype of black people as violent in North America has existed since the beginning of slavery. Furthermore the attention focused on violence at black clubs, such as last year's murder of a bouncer at Vibes, a black club, amplify this stereotype.

Evidently, a club security guard's job is to avoid having fights in their bar. But what shouldn't be a part of their job description is a racist standard by which they judge an individual's antagonistic tendencies. I asked Ali and Ron if they thought that their colleagues in clubland might discriminate against black people because they carried racist stereotypes of all black males as prone to violence. Ali had actually heard this stated from a white bouncer and Ron, although he said no one had ever explicitly told him this, felt that this bias was at work.

"If you see the same people doing the same thing every night it starts to affect your psyche," says Ron. "And in my opinion [regarding stereotypes of blacks and violence] I think many of them [bouncers] feel this way."

Moreover, economics plays an essential factor in racial discrimination. An owner selects a clientele which is almost always those groups

within our society with money and power.

However, exceptions occur. On slow nights, when the owner is not making money, more 'outsiders' are let in. And, like Ali mentioned, when a mainstream club has lost its reputation, and its desired clientele, then the club will begin letting in others.

"A club has a lifecycle," explains Ali. "For example the club Neville's didn't let brothers in there and it was well known that they weren't. Now that it's on a down swing we see all sorts of brothers in there."

"What it all comes down to is, do blacks and whites really like each other?" continues Ali. But in a world where white people still maintain the power to enforce their will on minority groups, what I think it comes down to is, how far have we really come when incidences of racial discrimination can still go unchallenged? Have we overestimated our gains?"

My perception is that clubs are a good measure of the extent to which social integration and social space are given within our society. And, thus, indicative of many unspoken sentiments among Canadians. Although large steps towards integration have been made in areas such as employment and education,

white people are still not ready to give up cultural space.

In the end what happens in the subsectors of our nation affects how power relations are played out in the larger society. Yet next Saturday night all along St. Laurent and Crescent St., hundreds of club goers will be waiting in line, and dozens of bouncers will be standing guard. Many visible minorities will be refused. And this goes unquestioned.

If the majority of Canadians are not ready to let us into their leisure space, where partnerships are formed, how will this affect us in the other institutions of our society?

Last night I was talking about this article with my friend Neera Madhok, who is of South Asian descent. She concluded that she is often made to feel so uncomfortable standing in a club line and inside a bar, that often she avoids them altogether.

I tend to avoid them as well, and I suspect many other visible minorities feel the same way. But then again this is what the mainstream clubs want anyways.

** The names Ali and Ron were given to clarify who was speaking and because the interviewees requested anonymity.*

Playing with Reason

Karasick's *Genrecide* breaks literary boundaries

by Noémi Tousignant

It has always fascinated me to observe how postmodern gibberish/discourse questions the opposition within the playfulness/dead-seriousness dichotomy. I find that blurring the border between these, and therefore de-opposing them, is one of the most convincing destabilising effects of deconstruction. In "Genrecide", with a pun-title à la Derrida, Adeena Karasick explores not making sense without making nonsense, and putting deconstruction into practice without making it practical. The title is a play on the words genre and 'geno-

cide', and the text revolves around the mixing of literary genres and the ethnic and feminist implications of (im)purity. "It is a celebration of what is unclear and unclear," explains Karasick.

It is crucially important that we do not separate the academe from the "rest."

"Genrecide" is about writing the INSANI (unclean, defiled, not clear) (genrecide)

"What is poetry? What is prose?" asks

Karasick, both in our interview and throughout her writing. She uses "contamination", a favourite deconstructive strategy, to question the divisions between literary genres, but also to overcome the fissure between academic

"high art", and the "low art" of pop-culture. In genrecide, dense academic language and colourful ads and slogans, are forced to share a common space on the page, brought together in a "clash of discourses, of dialects," as Karasick puts it.

"It is crucially important [in the classroom] that we do not separate the academe from the 'rest'," states Karasick, defining the 'rest' as: "Pop culture, and the lan-

Pop culture, and the language of it, these are the structures we live in, that we understand the world through, that we are infected by.

— Adeena Karasick

guage of it, these are the structures we live in, that we understand the world through, that we are infected by." Karasick has recently defended her doctoral thesis in the Ph.D. in humanities program, and is on the brink of her academic teaching career. She also has a widespread reputation as a performer; she has toured with

Lollapalooza, and performed all over Canada, the US, Europe, Asia, and Africa.

You might not "get" large portions of Karasick's text, but "getting it" is not the point of this literary venture. "I am working against the notion of transparency," says Karasick. The technical theoretical terms and the anti-lyrical, non-narrative style of Karasick's writing are not meant to make genrecide accessible or marketable. genrecide is not actually meant to "mean" anything in the way we have grown familiar to, but rather to question established methods of meaning-production.

The inaccessibility of the text puts a reader in a position of "defamiliarity". It makes the reader feel uncomfortably "other" to the text, but also makes the reader aware of the points at which the "otherness" dissolves into recognition. Recognition, which is a surprisingly pleasant sensation, appears unexpectedly; through an advertisement slogan or a snatch of song you know, a pun you got, or a sentence straight out of the last article of postmodern theory you read.

Reading, or rather "experiencing", genrecide might submerge the reader in a panoply of emotions, not through, but rather, in relation, to the text. I was, at first, insulted by its covert cleverness, then disconcerted by the way genrecide played with me, and finally amused by the way I played with it. It is a book to be looked at (randomly, opened at any page), and looked through, more than once.

Its value is in its cumulative effect; both of your perceptions of it, and of the sequence of its different parts. The style(s) of genrecide discourage(s) the reader from assuming a passive approach towards it. It is difficult to remain in that uncomfortable position of "other" towards the text, and one feels compelled to make it one's own, by any means, whether it be looking each word up in the dictionary or ascribing an "imaginary" meaning to each word. I recommend taking it into the bath, and reading it aloud; in funny accents, at different speeds, to a jazz-beat or in rap-freestyle. "I'm interested in looking at the materiality of words [...] and in the musicality of theoretical terms," says Karasick. Against the backdrop of criss-crossing genres and intricate games of meaning, is a sharp awareness of the concrete form of the written word. The book is dedicated, in part, "to all the letters, their shapes, combined and separated...", and one section of the book is prefaced by a note stating that "Each of the following sentences has a grand mixture of vowels and consonants."

Not Just Life-Size Plaster

George Segal Retrospective: Sculptures, Paintings, Drawings

by Anna Alfredson

Walking through the Montréal Museum of Fine Arts, our own position in humanity is thrown into perspective as we gaze upon figures and images which seem to mirror a bit of our own lives. Frozen in everyday activities, George Segal's art enacts the commonly over-looked tasks which comprise the bulk of human life.

Life size and plaster white, the faces and carriage of George Segal's sculptures loom their message of alienation and commonness above us. A lonely figure sits transfixed to a glowing television in a bar, Budweiser sign shouting out its neon indifference. There is a striking breach in the everyday as we walk into a Holocaust scene and witness the agony present in the face of each individual. Stepping through another doorway we find ourselves within the bedroom of two lovers wholly engrossed in one another, legs entwined. Simply a set of only tragedies and burdens, we are not. As humans, each moment of our existence tells our tale, whether we are in this instance weeping into someone's arms or ordering a meal at the diner. George Segal's work both reflects and enlarges our smallest movements in life.

Segal's work extends far beyond his famed plaster figures. In this exhibition, pastel and charcoal drawings, oil and acrylic paintings as well as pieces in other mediums have been included. In consultation with guest curator Marco Livingstone, George Segal has carefully

selected a range of works which encompass every medium he has worked with over the last four decades.

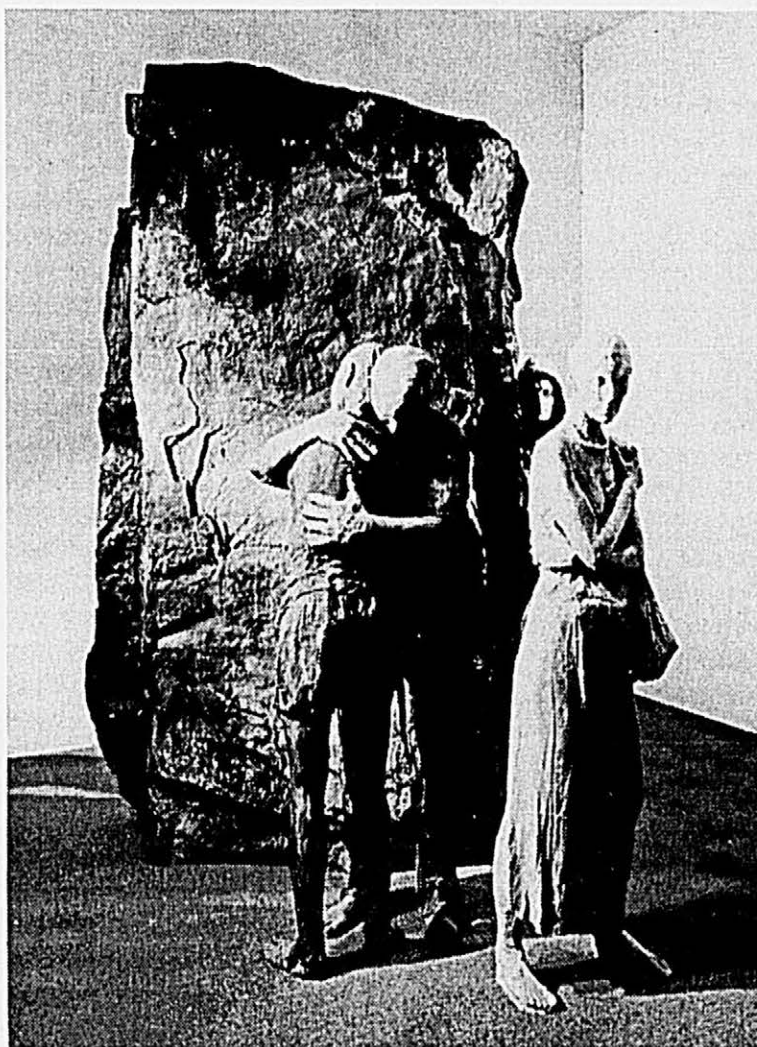
The exhibit reveals how each work remains true to the central subject, which Segal de-

However one chooses to interpret the human predicament, a part of it must lie inside each of us. And this connection is immediately felt as we reflect upon Segal's works. We feel ourselves pulled into the lives of these figures, and the significance of their symbolism reverberates throughout all of our collected experience.

Although often associated with Pop Art, George Segal said himself at the opening reception on Tuesday that he is hesitant to describe his work as such. Often, an integral part of Pop Art is the viewer's detachment from the subject, and perhaps the subject's detachment from the surrounding environment. In doing this, Pop Art pulls viewers out of their traditional roles. For instance, in his films, Jean-Luc Goddard constantly breaks up the flow of action. This reminds viewers that they are in the audience and are not a part of the world projected onto the screen. The structure of Segal's work may be in some ways similar to that of Pop Art, but the attachment or detachment that the viewer feels in viewing one versus the other is not. George Segal's work will leave you anything but detached as you walk among over seventy pieces selected from 40 years worth of masterful work.

This is a retrospective show that, as Marco Livingstone pointed out, is not likely to be put together again in our lifetime.

George Segal, a Retrospective: Sculpture, Paintings, Drawings will be exhibited at The Montreal Museum of Fine Arts from September 25, 1997 to January 11, 1998.



GEORGE SEGAL'S *LES ADIEUX D'ABRAHAM A ISMAEL*

scribes as the human predicament. This condition is ingrained in the telling lines of *Sophie's* face as the charcoal strokes record each moment of her existence and accumulated wisdom. It is written in the emotion conveyed in the pensive, sorrowful expression of the subject in *Provincetown Interior II*.

HAPPENING

Musicians commonly inhabit metro stations, as does the distinctive smell of the urban underground pathways. Often, the typical open guitar case or hat lies in front of them with bits of change, as their melodies echo throughout the station. If the pedestrians are impressed, we usually see a small group of them crowded in front of the musician. It is a welcome surprise to hear good music in such a common place where millions pass through on their way to work; it has free and general admission. In addition to obnoxious honking, construction, and conversation, it is the soundtrack to city life.

The 22nd International Day of Music has strategically picked a perfect location, with a clear goal in mind. Taking place in the Berri-UQAM metro station, the organizers of the event, the Conseil québécois de la musique, have specifically chosen the "nerve centre" of Montréal. Just as the middle of a university's campus is an optimum

From the concert halls to the Montréal underground Berri-UQAM metro-station hosts the 22nd International Day of Music

by Yohei Igarashi

place to sell hot dogs, the main metro station in Montréal is the ideal spot to play music to as many people possible.

Especially in Montréal, the relationship between the French and the English is only one of the many instances of racial tension. In light of this, the event is a much-needed remedy as it puts the medium of music as 'the universal language' to use. Furthermore, the variety of classes which ride the metro daily will be inundated by this cultural event. Hopefully, this will provide them with the opportunity to broaden their acceptance of a variety of peoples.

The event includes performances of the traditional music of China, Brazil, Argentina, Australia, Morocco, and Bali amongst others. The line-up was formed to roughly represent some of the cultural communities in Montréal.

"We tried to give Montrealers a taste of music from the different communities in Montréal," explains

Girard. "These musicians all live in Montréal, good musicians. We wanted to showcase a diverse array of music."

Created in 1975 by renowned violinist Yehudi Menuhin, the tradition takes place in twenty other countries around the world. Organizers of the last three events have tried to keep the spirit of the first International Week of Music (now the International Day of Music) alive.

Andrée Girard of Conseil québécois de la musique and the coordinator behind this year's celebration of international music says, "We want to show people how music is dynamic and important in our country as well as all countries. The idea of Yehudi Menuhin was to take music out of the concert halls so that everyone could hear it."

However, the motivation to expose the event to a large audience is undermined by the acoustical draw-backs involved in playing in a metro station.

"The acoustics will not be like a

concert hall's," says Girard. "It's not a concert. But we can make the best of the situation. It is not the best sound, but the focus is to reach the people. We were trying to do it [the event] at the McGill metro station, but the sound was awful."

"Our goals were to display music and the art of peace," he continues. "We wanted to show that this art does not consider languages, and can help bring peace to humans universally."

In addition to the all-day musical performances there will be exhibitions and information booths. Some booths will display rare musical instruments from the collection of the Université de Montréal and others will distribute information on organizations like the Opéra de Montréal, I Musici de Montréal, and the Ensemble Amati.

One of the featured musicians will be Sylvain Matthieu, the conductor of the Gamelan which is a traditional orchestra from Bali. Famous for its spectacular array of

deep drum sounds revolving around different themes, the Gamelan is "drums and also lots of brass percussion instruments like gongs and metalophones, explains Matthieu. "It is the traditional music of Bali, Indonesia, and consists of an orchestra of twenty-five people. The music is traditionally played for ceremonies".

In accord with the organizers, Matthieu is there to infiltrate the everyday Montrealer with music from other cultures. "We are playing the music of the world. We just want to make people hear some of it," he explains.

Driven by the desire to educate people about international music with a modern day proletariat attitude, the International Day of Music will be resonating in the metro station, and ringing in the ears of attendees and metro riders who pass through on Wednesday, October 1st. As Girard explains, "we want to touch people who don't go to concert halls."

"I heard they're gay"

by Kevin Siu

Pansy Division salute you

For every Ellen, for whom stardom preceded public knowledge of her 'aberrant' sexuality, for whom coming out involved millions of television sets across North America, for whom the fear of a backlash will be answered in Neilson ratings, there have been countless other performers who didn't have to worry about a thing. For them, coming out wasn't a concern — if only for the rather redundant reason that they were never 'in'.

In the case of San Francisco-based pop-punk band Pansy Division, being queer has not only been a matter of fact, but a grinning badge of honour, and a prolific one at that. Since 1991, the band has released five full-length albums and almost a dozen singles while continually replacing drummers, inspiring the term "queercore" and touring the US, Canada, Europe, Australia and New Zealand. Along the way, Pansy Division has subverted as much straight iconography as possible, and probably more. If a song entitled "Cowboys Are Secretly Fond Of Each Other" is a given, then stickers bearing the image of Beavis and Butt-head locked in intimacy are beyond the call of duty.

Pansy Division's latest album, *More Lovin' From Our Oven*, sees new

drummer Luis joining guitarist Jon Ginoli and bassist Chris Freeman. Together they deftly debunk a few more bastions of straightness, including headbangers on "Headbanger" ("He turned on his cd player / Did I prefer Metallica or Slayer? / I said 'Whatever will get you hot' / By the second song, our clothes were off") and — a subject close to our Northern hearts — hockey players on "Hockey Hair" ("He'll turn a bedroom hat trick three times in one night"). In fact, Canada warrants extra lovin' from the band's oven; in addition to "Hockey Hair," *More Lovin'* reserves a special salute for Canadian bacon — in both official languages.

"The song 'Manada' is direct praise for the men of Canada," frontman Ginoli explains during a stopover in Detroit on the current tour. "And recording the song in both English and French — we don't actually speak French, but it was translated for us — was our attempt to try to address both sides of the language divide."

No doubt it increases one's chances of scoring, too.

The new album also adds to the band's expansive resumé of covers. In the past, Pansy Division has virtually cornered the market, with slightly — and in some cases, not-so-slightly — altered versions of songs like Nirvana's "Smells Like Teen Spirit" ("Smells Like Queer Spirit") and AC/DC's "For Those About To Rock, We Salute You" ("For Those About To Suck Cock, We Salute You"). On *More Lovin'*, new victims include Depeche

Mode, the Police, KISS and Judas Priest, whose metal anthem, "Breaking The Law," is made-over into a cheeky dismissal of anti-sodomy legislation. And the remakes are accompanied by rather astute comments in the liner notes: "Check out Judas Priest vocalist Rob Halford's motorcycle leatherman routine and then tell us he's not a bigol' queen!"

But Ginoli describes this as "the tail-end of that road." Since the addition of Luis and second guitarist Patrick Goodwin (who is absent on *More Lovin'*), there has been a conscious move away from covers and, surprising for a band

whose playful irreverence is a trademark, away from humour as well. In the material for the next album, the band is striving to divert focus from elements that might have been obscuring the band's more conscientious political intentions.

"There's still the humour," Ginoli assures me, "but [on the newer songs] we're more serious... We're doing things more subtly than before. People sometimes don't realize that be-

hind the joke there's serious intent and there's a message."

This change in lyrical attitude is coupled with a musical shift, away from the "confined parameters" of punk towards more sophisticated pop, which can be arguably just as confining. Though the band's roots are in the pop-punk of the Buzzcocks and the Ramones, Pansy Division



WHAT'S COOKIN', GOOD LOOKIN'? CHRIS, JON, AND LUIS CHECK ON THE PIE

wants to begin reflecting the wider diversity of their current record collections. There is already evidence of this on *More Lovin'*; for example, "Expiration Date 01/97" bears greater relation to the slow, heavy signature of the Melvins than, say, Green Day or NOFX.

"The older stuff is not anything I'm embarrassed about. But the newer material is more textured and melodic without being boring.... People hear

'Expiration Date' and say, 'whoa, is that Pansy Division?'" Ginoli says, with a trace of pride. "There are a few songs that are somewhat Beatlesque, a song that sounds like Neil Young, one influenced by the Fall. We're picking different colours from the palette rather than sticking to the same flavours — um, that's a terribly mixed metaphor."

Mixed metaphors aside though, there is a purpose. Concerned about possible perceptions of the band as a novelty act, and intent on avoiding marginalization, Pansy Division wants to take a stab at a little bit of mainstream credibility. And a more serious approach, Ginoli reasons, need not necessarily lead to selling out.

"We're trying to maintain our independence and do what we want to do, but reach a bigger audience. There's a big gap between kd lang and Melissa Etheridge and us, but we want to reach people — people who might not know us, but who'd like us."

Amen — just don't let them know you're gay.

Pansy Division plays Jailhouse Rock (30 Mont Royal) on September 25 (tonight) with Mollies Revenge and Number One Cup. Tickets available on the day of the show only.

Beat Factory

Rap Essentials Vol. Two

(EMI/Capitol)

It is without a doubt that Canadian Hip-hop and rap is one of the most underpromoted styles in our country. To ask the average radio listener to list 7 Canadian rap albums released this decade is like asking them to solve a deductive logic equation: they'll get you the answer, but it will take some research and time.

In an effort to bring Canadian rap to the forefront (and thus making the aforementioned question easier to answer) comes *Rap Essentials Vol. Two*. The album is a compilation compiled and executive produced by DJ Luv, along with a collective known as the Beat Factory.

One needs to look no further than the first track to perhaps recognize a name. Infinite's "Gotta Get Mine" is currently all over Musique Plus/MuchMusic. Formerly of Ghetto Concert, Infinite displays an ability to mesh the structure of a contemporary pop song with a hook and solid lyrics. Unfortunately, we've all heard this song before as it is quite formulaic. After hearing the album just once, it became evi-

dent what the standouts were. Madlock's "Gusto" is stylistically the most complex track on the album. Flavours of G-Funk, Hardcore and a positive vibe are thrown together giving a fluid sound, but it'll take a few more tries for Madlock to find a unique flavour. Sic Sense, who are "emancipating heads from the devil's design" drop the lyrics like pros. Not feeling the need to dress it up with fancy studio tricks, they release "Infinite B-Boy," a pounding rhythm that is one for the head. With the right moves, Sic Sense's Boom, Dubill-O and Six Pac could be headed for Big Props. Most impressive of all, however, is Down Ta Erf's "Formation," a throw back to the old school with multiple scatching and samples while adding on a jazz piano line. Adding on Steely Dan, Mathematic and Wall, these boys can't leave my tape deck.

The second volume of this noble cause goes down in an honest, hard-working effort that may just produce what the Canadian rap scene is really lacking: attention.

— Patrick Moss

Valentino

Weeping Tile

Warner Music

One can only feel disappointment, even slight distaste, towards an effort such as Weeping Tile's second album *Valentino*. It is an after-the-fact record of cutesy alterna-rock from a band that was noticed, not only by virtue of their music, but also because of its concurrent release within the dam-break of female fronted bands (i.e. Cub, Frente), which flooded the market 2 years ago. Their debut album was once hailed as possessing the qualities of being both "haunting" and "happy-go-lucky." And *Valentino* seems entirely geared to recapture some vestige of the media darling status achieved during that seemingly endless fad of vapidty.

The quotidian catchy tunes are too easily confused with their previous hit singles and the entire album is weakened by songwriter Sarah Harmers' unengaging lyrical and vocal approach, especially evident on the lackadaisical, sweeping ballads that provide a tiresome end to the album.

There remains, despite my harsh criticism, a melodic quality to the first few tracks, formulaic though they may be, and this makes the album palatable, in small portions. It would be untrue to say I didn't enjoy the happier, less lachrymal songs, but it would be hard to recommend *Valentino* for any collection.

— Matthew Murphy

Events

Tuesday September 30

The Social Justice Committee and Outils de Paix present Nicaragua: under the rightist government of Arnoldo Alemá. Featured is Edwin Zablah, Vice-President of Latin American Development Fund. Social Justice Committee, 1857 de Maisonneuve Ouest. For Info: 933-6797.

Memorial service for Professor Edwin Furcha of the Faculty of Religious Studies in the Birks Chapel at 11h45. A reception will follow.

Ongoing

Every Monday Erskine and American United Church and the United Heritage Trust Fund present a thrift shop/bazar. Used clothing, household goods, books, toys, jewellery, and collectibles will be available. Erskine and American United Church.

Sherbrooke Street at Crescent. Entrance at 3407 du Musée. For Information call 849-3286 between 10 am - 4 pm.

LBGT (Lesbian, Bisexual, Gay and Transgendered students of McGill) offers the following discussion groups. Coming out group: Friday at 5:30 pm in the basement of 3521 University St. Bisexual Group: room 423 of the Shatner Building, (the women's union.) Womyn's group: Thursday at 6:30 in room 423 of Shatner. Men's group: Friday at 7:00pm in the basement of 3521 University St.

Volunteer internship Program offered for those interested in working with seniors. The CLSC René-Cassin is offering a special 28-week volunteer internship program for people wishing to gain experience in the field of gerontology. The program runs from November 3rd until May 25.

Play

Great Big Sea

Universal

From the great province of Newfoundland, the band Great Big Sea, buoyed by the success of their major label debut *Up*, have released their sophomore effort, titled *Play*. This album returns to their original formula in their first release of high energy folk music with traditional Celtic overtones. Some songs were so driven I almost felt as though I was at an Irish pub and doing a jig with the laddies.

The album begins optimistically with the song "Ordinary Day". With lyrics such as: "it's an ordinary day / and it's all your state of mind / at the end of the day / you've just got to say it's alright." The band's love of their home province is reflected in many of their songs including "Seagulls", "Ordinary Day", and also through such traditional folk songs as "The Night Pat Murphy Died" and "Jolly Loving Tar". I could easily picture these songs being performed in a stereotypical Newfoundland setting: sitting around the fire with the family and cooking up a big fish dinner as traditions are passed on through the generations.

But by now, I'm sure that everyone's heard the first single from GBS' second album, "When I'm Up (I Can't Get Down)". And the

reality that this song and the album on a whole is touching a widespread audience is helping to break down the preconceived notions of Newfoundlanders. And it's no doubt that the band's musical versatility has helped with their rise in popularity. The artists use such instruments as the bouzouki, the mandolin, the fiddle and the tin whistle to reflect an eclecticism that is present in the music.

One of my favourite songs on the album, "How Did We Get From Saying I Love You..." is evidence of the talent that GBS possesses. They have taken traditional Newfoundland music, originally from across the Atlantic, and have added their own special blend to it, which creates an enjoyable mix of old and new. At first I was quite hesitant as I approached *play*, but now after listening to it a number of times, I can honestly say the Great Big Sea has an appeal that is able to please the ears of many.

— Le'Nise Brothers

Rahsaan Patterson

Rahsaan Patterson

(MCA/Universal)

Every now and then, an album comes along that forces you to stop whatever it is you're doing and listen. Rahsaan Patterson's is definitely NOT one of those al-

supply the Backstreet Boys with a second career) and the songs are ill-crafted.

While "Where You Are" and "So Fine" provide grooves and basslines that could have inched this album toward respectability, "Stop By," "Ain't No Way" and "Tears Ago" are endless you-broke-my-heart epics that go nowhere, simply refusing to die. Others, such as "Stay Awhile," "Joy" and "Don't Wanna Lose It" are calculatingly conventional in both song structure and instrumentation.

But there is a much greater evil here than just a bad album.

This entire project reflects the wishes of a monster music corporation to market and package the image of a solo artist as the intellectual cooler-than-thou rebel à la Ben Harper, but without his musical talent.

There are pictures of Rahsaan in his mel-low mood (flannel shirt), pictures of Rahsaan in his intellectual mode (suit and glasses) and pictures of Rahsaan as the 'artiste' (smoking a cigarette)... what, no Rahsaan swimsuit section?

— Patrick Moss



bums. I should have known just by glancing at the song titles ("Spend the Night," "One More Night," "Can't We Wait A Minute?" etc.) that this was one broken-hearted fool who would make my week much longer.

In all seriousness though, Rahsaan Patterson fancies himself a jazz/funk/soul/R&B artist, attempting to emulate Jamiroquai, early '80s Prince and every damn '70s supper club in North America. The problem is that his lyrics lack poignancy (there are enough oooh oooh oooh's and la la la's on this album to

Minding Clothes, Fabulously!

Photographic installations that transcend race, gender, and time in private and public spaces

by Salman M. Husain

"You're born naked — the rest is drag." So says the enlightened RuPaul. In a similar fashion Pierre Delpé states this in his graphic installations of black and white portraits — *Clothes Minded* — but with a twist. Consider this food for thought: ballerina dominatrix, sailor opera singer, sissy-but, the-boy-next-door-lipstick-lesbian, flaming queen leatherman, powertool-but, go-go girl. Get the picture? We're talking about a gender blender.

Delpé's pictures investigate socially constructed attire of everyday life and its close relation to drag. This is the running theme in the series of *Clothes Minded* diptychs.

in society, even if that's rarely acknowledged.

Homeboy Pierre Delpé is a graduate of Concordia University's bachelor of Arts program in film studies and photography. He has taken part in numerous group exhibitions and a few solo exhibitions within Canada and in New York city's prestigious Leslie-Lohman Gallery. Delpé's work explores costuming and clothing as it relates to gender and cross-dressing. "The history and ongoing evolution of drag as a tool for self-expression is pivotal to my work," explains Delpé.

Clothes Minded: New and old work. This study on the on-going evolution of drag is expressed in multi levels. Two gems of expressions to be watched for are "Wendy" and "Mr. Michaels and His Kim sisters, Paris 1920". The former is an example of subverting the icons and codes of popular culture to cre-



"The subjects appear in their various stages of drag with their personal and private spaces," comments Delpé. The exhibition challenges gender roles by pointing out the reality that these marginalized roles, often considered to fall outside of society, are also a product of social construct. In other words, Delpé is not only making a statement and a running commentary on prevailing attitudes, but is also forging a space within the space of societal parameters.

Drag is just one of the themes explored in *Clothes Minded*, which also deals with a broader sexual content. The exhibit includes Oscar Wilde's idea of breaking barriers by way of masking oneself in one's presentation. Though in this installation, the notion is juxtaposed with a contemporary defiance for masks through contradictory discourse. In effect, the exhibit touches on the philosophy of "Other", claiming that there exists an "Other" beyond the male/female dichotomy constructed



ate codes and styles of its own. The latter is a powerful piece which shows that controversial gender roles have constantly been present throughout history. This revealing insight makes Delpé's case in point stronger.

All in all *Clothes Minded* is a solidly engaging work. It is an intellectual offering with tongue in cheek which gives this important exhibition a sense of humour and above all makes it fun.

Clothes Minded, Galerie Pink, 1456 rue Notre Dame, September 20th to October 12th. Thurs-Sun 1pm-5pm, Galerie Pink 935-9851, Pierre Delpé 270-3935, www.total.net/~anaka/clothes.minded

daily classifieds

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